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SUBJECT: THIRD COMMITTEE TAKES ACTION ON THE RIGHT OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION, COMBATING DEFAMATION OF
RELIGION, AND OTHERS

¶1. SUMMARY: On November 12, the UNGA Third Committee took action on 16 draft resolutions, adopting 10 by consensus and 6 by vote. Despite efforts to persuade the OIC to reconsider running their resolution on Defamation of Religion, the OIC moved the resolution quickly to a vote, which was adopted despite a large number of abstentions and no votes (81-55(U.S.))-43). The African Group's attempts to delete two indirect references to gay/lesbian rights prevailed by one vote on the first occasion, followed immediately by a loss by one vote on the second occasion. END SUMMARY.

¶2. The action in the UN's Third Committee on thematic human rights issues was marked by a close vote on a gay rights' related issue, a divided approach to Islamophobia, and overwhelming support for Palestinian self-determination. The resolution on International Covenants on Human Rights contained two references to "General Comments" of treaty bodies, the second of which advocated non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Zambia, on behalf of the African Group, introduced amendments to resolution A/C.3/64/L.22 (International Covenants on Human Rights) to delete these two references to General Comments. Finland, the main sponsor, called for a vote on those two amendments. The first amendment passed with 70-69(U.S.))-25. The second amendment failed with 71-72(U.S.))-23. Since one amendment had passed, the resolution would require a vote, which it passed with 111(U.S.))-0-66. Delegates from the U.S., Mexico, Canada, Chile, U.K., Switzerland, and New Zealand, in an explanation of vote, supported the main text of the resolution but were disappointed that the Zambia amendment had passed. Iran and Pakistan did not vote in favor of the resolution because both amendments were not passed.

¶3. Israel called a recorded vote on resolution A/C.3/64/L.56 (The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination). It was adopted by 171-6(U.S.))-5. The U.S., Israel, and Micronesia gave an EOY against the resolution, while Argentina, Australia, Iran, and Palestine gave an EOY in favor of the resolution.

¶4. Resolutions A/C.3/64/L.27 (Combating defamation of religions); A/C.3/64/L.31 (Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights); A/C.3/64/L.45 (Human rights and unilateral coercive measures); and A/C.3/64/L.48 (Promotion of equitable geographical distribution in the membership of the human rights treaty bodies) were adopted by vote. Resolution L.27 was adopted with 81-55(U.S.))-43. The EU and U.S. EOY before the vote stressed that the resolution actually went against freedom of religion. Brazil, Colombia, Jamaica, and Albania also spoke in EOY for their abstention. Resolution L.31 was adopted with 125-54(U.S.))-3. Resolution L.45 was called to a vote by the U.S. and it was adopted with 128-52(U.S.))-0. In the EOY, the U.S. delegate said that the text had no basis in international law and did not serve the cause of advancing human rights. Resolution L.48 was called to a vote by the U.S. and was adopted with 125-51(U.S.))-3.

¶5. In a general statement before action on resolution L.41/Rev.1 (Protection of migrants), acting ECOSOC representative John Sammis said the U.S. had joined consensus given the well-established

principle that States could regulate the flow of migrants into their territory.

¶6. The Third Committee adopted the following resolutions by consensus: A/C.3/64/L.52*, (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee); A/C.3/64/L.58 (Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Program of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees); A/C.3/64/L.51 (Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination); A/C.3/64/L.24 (Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities and operational Protocol thereto); A/C.3/64/L.32 (National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights); A/C.3/64/L.33/Rev.1 (Follow-up to the International Year of Human Rights Learning); A/C.3/64/L.34/Rev.1 (Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons); A/C.3/64/L.41/ Rev.1 (Protection of migrants); A/C.3/64/L.46 (Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights); A/C.3/64/L.11/Rev.1 (Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons). Cuba requested that A/C.3/64/L.28 (Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order); A/C.3/64/L.29 (Strengthening UN actions in the field of human rights through the promotions of international cooperation and the importance of non-selectivity, impartiality and objectivity); and A/C.3/64/L.30/Rev.1 (The right to food) be postponed until the next week.

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